

# CONTINUANCE

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*Knowledge and Understanding Passing from Generation to Generation*

Spring/Summer 2008

## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT throughout the lifespan: From the earliest hours to the last

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National Governors Association Selects Illinois  
Aging is an Asset for Civic Engagement  
IBHE and the Future of Higher Education

# INTERGENERATIONAL INITIATIVE PARTNERS

*Improving education through  
intergenerational engagement and leadership.*

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### Knowledge and Understanding Passing from Generation to Generation

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## INTERGENERATIONAL INITIATIVE

The goal of the Intergenerational Initiative is to  
create an infrastructure of retiree involvement.  
The following actions set that goal in motion:

- promote intergenerational engagement and leadership that will help solve the perplexing problems of education
- advocate for a public policy responsive to the needs and resources of all ages
- foster communication and contact between generations and cultures
- enrich the educational experience through lifelong service and learning
- publicize the stories about the good things happening in education and in communities

*Founded in 1987 with funding from the  
Illinois Board of Higher Education*

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# Continuance

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James Vortuba

**About the cover:** Civic Engagement begins in the first hours of life as people help the parents and their infant and begin a lifetime of service and community involvement. The design produced by Karen Anderson shows the many ways people of all ages get engaged with their community.

As we go to press, we are saddened by the death of Joe Dunn, who gave us an extraordinary example of civic engagement in his personal life and through the organization he led, the Illinois Coalition for Community Services. He wrote an article in this issue called "You don't have to move to live in a better neighborhood," which describes his belief in the power of every individual to make change.

# National Governors Association Selects Illinois

*The Policy Academy of the National Governors Association selected six states to participate in their Policy Academy called Civic Engagement for Older Adults. The Academy focuses on helping states improve the health and lives of older adults by developing strategies for increasing the proportion of seniors who are employed or engaged in meaningful volunteer activities. Other states chosen were New York, Maryland, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Idaho.*

## Policy Academy Overview

During the Policy Academy, teams from the selected states will learn about important research, promising practices, and state policy options for promoting the civic engagement of older adults. Working closely with the National Governors Association (NGA) Center staff and other experts, the teams will develop civic engagement strategies for their states and action plans for implementing those strategies.

The Policy Academy will begin in July 2008 and continue through June 2009 and include the following:

### 1. On-site orientation Meeting

The NGA Policy Academy will conduct a one-day site visit in each selected state to facilitate initial planning and goal setting. The state teams will assess their current policies, programs and resources related to civic engagement strategies for older adults.

### 2. Policy Academy Meeting

A meeting of the state teams will be held in September. During this three-day meeting, state teams will work with leading experts as they refine their goals and begin to develop an action plan.

### 3. Post-Academy Meeting

After the Policy Academy meeting and throughout the project, the NGA Center staff will monitor each state's progress and provide customized technical assistance. A second national policy academy meeting may be held in the spring of 2009.

## ILLINOIS NGA TEAM

### Core Team Leadership for Illinois

Governor Rod Blagojevich appointed a core team for the NGA Policy Academy representing aging, education, business, and the workforce. The leadership includes:

**Steven Guerra**, deputy chief of staff, Office of the Governor

Team Leader: **Charles D. Johnson**, director, Illinois Department on Aging and

Project Director: **Jane Angelis**, director, Intergenerational Initiative, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale

### Members of Core Team

**Bob Gallo**, state director, AARP

**Marilyn Hennessy**, president, Retirement Research Foundation

**John Hosteny**, Illinois director, Corporation for National and Community Service

**Peggy Luce**, vice president, Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce

**Senator Edward Maloney**, chair, Senate Higher Education Committee

**Robert Mees**, Incoming president, Illinois Council of Community College Presidents and president, John A. Logan College

**Michael O'Donnell**, executive director, East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging, and

**Bernarda Wong**, founding director, Chinese American Service League

### Illinois will focus on increasing civic engagement by older Illinoisans in three ways:

- Developing an infrastructure of retiree involvement in work and volunteer activities that represent the racial, ethnic and regional diversity in our state,
- Communicating the importance of civic engagement to retirees, the public, and employers; and
- Developing policy to support civic engagement in Illinois.

### National Governors Association Center for Best Practices

**F**ounded in 1908, the National Governors Association is the collective voice of the nation's governors and one of Washington, D.C.'s most respected public policy organizations.

Tasked with developing innovative solutions to today's most pressing public policy challenges, the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) is the only policy research and development firm that directly serves the nation's governors and their key staff.

Governors rely on the NGA Center to provide tailored technical assistance for challenges facing their

states, identify and share best practices from across the country, and serve as an information clearinghouse for an array of gubernatorial initiatives.

Through research reports, policy analyses, cross-state learning labs, state grants and other unique services, the NGA Center quickly informs governors what works, what does not, and what lessons can be learned from others grappling with similar issues.

In order to capture the breadth of public policy challenges, states face in the 21st century, the NGA Center is organized into five divisions: Education; Health; Homeland Security and

Technology; Environment, Energy and Natural Resources; and Social, Economic and Workforce Programs.

Each division is staffed by experienced policy, research and communication professionals who provide states cutting-edge analysis, creative solutions, and practical policy recommendations.

John Thomasian is director of the NGA Center for Best Practices, Martin Simon and Linda Hoffman are members of the NGA Policy Academy Team targeting civic engagement for older adults. The funding for this project is provided by the Atlantic Philanthropies.

# Reflections on Civic Engagement

from the Illinois Core Team

National Governors Association Policy Academy



**Steven Guerra**  
**Deputy Chief of Staff**  
**Office of the Governor**

My most significant civic engagement experience was with the Hispanic Aids Network as a driver for distributing meals. I delivered breakfast and dinner on a daily basis to people who were homebound.

In the beginning, I didn't understand the gravity of the situation until I saw so many drivers participating. The impact on family was apparent, when I saw young children come to the door to get the meals.

Each driver had a standard route but it changed from time to time. One day you were told, "Don't go to someone's house anymore," and you knew what had happened.

The drivers would go where people lived and help them as an important part of the health care system. This experience underlined the idea that our health care system should be one big picture, one that meets the needs of individuals. This experience also taught me about access to health care and health care delivery systems. In our society, civic engagement is an important part of the system.

The opportunity to drive for the Hispanic Aids Network was an eye opener for me. I had grown up in a sheltered environment and this project gave me a hard dose of reality.



**Charles Johnson**  
**Director**  
**IL Department of Aging**

Civic engagement is a win-win situation for all involved. Older adults have a wealth of experience to share, and their wisdom can benefit Illinois' organizations and its residents. Civic engagement can be meaningful and provide older adults with the opportunities to use their talents to make a difference, contributing to their well-being. In their later years, older adults may finally have the time to pursue the causes they feel passionate about while helping their communities.

An example of successful civic engagement, bringing together older adults and young people, is the Foster Grandparents Program. For years, Foster Grandparents over the age of 60 have served as mentors encouraging at-risk children. Most of these children have benefited greatly from their time spent with these caring volunteers.

I have heard many positive stories of the bonds that have formed between Foster Grandparents and the children they encourage. An older adult can get a great deal of satisfaction from making a difference in a child's life. One of my early work experiences was the development of the Foster Grandparent Program at the Fox Developmental Center for multiple handicapped children. My experience in this program motivated me in my public service career.



**Jane Angelis, Director  
Intergenerational Initiative and Editor  
Continuance Magazine  
SIU Carbondale**

When the eyes of children light up with the approach of older tutors and elders develop a spring in their step as they walk toward the school, the value of an intergenerational program is crystal clear. Two different strategies are at work in such programs, first the older person and younger person are contributing to one another. Second, they are giving an example to others who may be observing.

I had the good fortune early in my career to observe these dual benefits of civic engagement when I met Joanne Alter and Rochelle Lee in the early 90s.

Joanne Alter had just retired and was developing a Retiree Corps to help Chicago students, particularly in schools where the children needed extra help. I was amazed how quickly she made it happen. With her friend Marion Stone and many others, WITS (Working in the Schools) soon became a reality at the Byrd Academy and Soujourner Truth School in the Cabrini Green housing development, one of the nation's most economically disadvantaged housing projects.

Volunteers gave one morning a week working with elementary

students. I attended a morning session with retirees who boarded a bus for the ride to Soujourner Truth School. Enthusiasm from kids and volunteers was almost palpable when the volunteers walked from the bus to various classrooms. As the morning went on you could see that the children were interested, asked questions, and enjoyed the attention. The children knew that these older people were there just for them.

The impact of WITS on young students will most likely never be fully documented, but Joanne and her volunteers planted the seeds of success in thousands of students and exemplified a model of productive and satisfying retirement.

When Rochelle Lee retired as a public school librarian, her interest in reading didn't end. Her retirement party was the beginning of an adventure that many thought impossible. With funding from friends and teachers given to her during that famous retirement party, the Rochelle Lee Fund was established in a one-room office on Clark St. in Chicago.

Rochelle Lee describes her experiences as a young librarian and how it paved the way for her

second career in retirement. "I started reading aloud to the children when they came to the library. We read and read and read! Once I started, they would not let me stop. They loved the stories and enjoyed discussing them once we finished. Reading and writing are the keys to every child's education — and together they expand a child's world."

The Fund provides books for teachers and schools, and gives workshops on the intricacies of reading instruction, for using fiction and nonfiction to foster real, active reading among students. Any teacher can apply for an award. The teachers selected are required to spend eight hours in workshops provided by the Rochelle Lee Fund. Essentially the teachers become learners. "If you don't know what's in a book, you can't be enthusiastic — and neither will the children."

Civic engagement has two roles, one is the act itself, getting involved. The other is giving an example that brings others into the activity and perpetuates the good things happening. Joanne and Rochelle symbolize millions of older Americans who come to the assistance of those in need.



**Bob Gallo, State Director  
AARP in Illinois**

Throughout our lives we look to family, friends, colleagues, government, employers or other organizations to provide us with the encouragement, support or resources we need to gain or maintain a happy and successful life. Having been the recipient of support and encouragement from others in my life has created a desire to give something back which remains a fundamental drive in my decisions to donate financial resources and time to others.

Over the years I have found many ways to give back including: helping elderly neighbors with chores they are no longer able to do; spending time mentoring “at-risk” middle school children, helping to rebuild a hurricane-ravaged home; volunteering with non-profit organizations; or simply answering a call from a distraught friend in the middle of the night.

When I look both to the past and the future in regard to my own civic engagement efforts, I also try to imagine what our society and world might be like if everyone who is willing and able contributed at least some of their time, resources and talents to others in their communities. After spending several months in Louisiana after the devastation of two back-to-back

hurricanes, I participated in and witnessed the incredible impact volunteer organizations were having in helping people rebuild their lives and homes. In fact it is mainly through the efforts of volunteers in the Gulf States that the rebuilding effort continues today. The lessons of hurricanes Katrina and Rita are an extraordinary example of what we as ordinary citizens can do to help each other.

**“The challenge now is to match the vast resources of individuals who also feel the need to give back.”**

AARP volunteers demonstrate time and again that age is no limit to the number of opportunities available to anyone willing enough to give back in some way that is meaningful and rewarding to themselves and others. We know that individuals age 50+ have been involved as volunteers at the same rate as other generations, and they intend to do so in the future. In addition, they are more outcome-oriented than previous generations as they want to see the impact of their work.

So far, many of the baby boom generation’s volunteer activities have been focused on their children, and now that the kids are leaving

home there is an opportunity to involve them in new ways and in larger numbers and for new causes. A perfect example is our recent work with the Peace Corps in finding ways to recruit qualified AARP members and other older individuals. Who else might be better equipped to provide assistance to people in far-off lands striving for a better way of life than those who can bring years of experience and wisdom or unique solutions to problems as they have done in their own lives and professions?

But one doesn’t have to travel across the globe to be engaged in a cause or to lend a helping hand. Opportunities abound in our own communities and neighborhoods right here in Illinois. The challenge now is to match the vast resources of individuals who also feel the need to give back, and AARP is developing innovative ways to help people connect to the needs in their communities.

In the not-so-distant future, our tagline “AARP The Power to Make it Better” will become even more meaningful through the increased participation of our 1.8 million members here in Illinois and 40 million across the nation. I’m looking forward to being one of them.



## Marilyn Hennessey, President Retirement Research Foundation

Civic engagement is important to Illinois because there is extraordinary potential to transform the state through involvement of the currently retired and just beginning to retire baby boomers. Companionship, intellectual engagement, and meaningful engagement are desired by most as they transition from full-time employment.

Illinois has many challenges and ways must be designed to inform and involve retirees in addressing the challenges. Human service agencies must learn to involve this emerging resource in achieving

their mission and objectives. Advocates must tap into the power of committed local citizens.

Educational institutions must attract greater numbers to the life-

**“To expand civic engagement in Illinois and to tap into this large talented resource will require the concerted collaboration of the private sector and the government.”**

long learning opportunities available and be responsive in their programs.

Employers must recognize that a contracting retirement income system, longer lifespans, and rising health care costs are creating the

need for longer work lives for many Illinoisans.

The productivity and reliability of older workers are well documented. The employer challenge is to create the workforce policies that encourage the continued employment of older workers or their transition to part time roles.

To expand civic engagement in Illinois and to tap into this large talented resource will require the concerted collaboration of the private sector and government.



## John Hosteny, Illinois Director Corporation for National and Community Service

I was six years old when my younger brother and I fought over who would hold Leona's purse. My father and older brother ever so gently lifted Leona from her wheelchair into our car.

It was Sunday and our family had the privilege of taking Leona, who had polio, to church. "Be careful boys," she would tell us. "All the money in the world is in my purse."

Leona always said we were the best mannered boys she had ever met. My mom knew better but she was glad to hear it anyway. My mom said even though Leona could not walk, she "volunteered."

**“Leona showed me that if you have a passion to help, no matter your age or challenge, you can make a difference.”**

I thought that meant she had to work and not be paid.

It was years later that I realized my mom and Leona went to nursing school together, and both “volunteered” to serve in WWII. Leona was a registered nurse, and

her wheelchair was her companion. She stayed in Chicago and taught others how to dress a wound, move a patient and how to care for a dying person.

Leona showed me that if you have a passion to help, no mat-

ter your age or challenge, you can make a difference. When older workers stay engaged in society, they give the promise of tomorrow to everyone.



**Peggy Luce, Vice President  
Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce**

The civic engagement I am most proud of is my 10 years from 1984 to 1994 on the board of directors of The Center for Rehabilitation & Training of Persons with Disabilities, now known as the Anixter Center. In 1987, I joined others in my Congressional District to visit Congressman John Porter and express our strong support of his bill, The Volunteer Protection Act.

As a board director, I was well aware of the rise of litigation contributing to a decrease in volunteerism and the necessity for non-profit organizations to put time and money traditionally spent for

client programs into defensive efforts and increased directors and officers insurance premiums.

**“Hopefully, the volunteer environment of Illinois will encourage mature adults to join non-profit boards of directors.”**

The voices supporting volunteer protection were sustained with help from many concerned citizens and organizations. Finally Congress passed and the President signed the 1997 Volunteer Protection Act to protect non-profit organizations and volunteers from excessive and frivolous litigation.

Thanks go to Reps. John Porter, R-Ill., and Bob Inglis, R-S.C., and Sen. Paul Coverdell R-Ga.

There are more than 35,000 501(C)(3) public charities and 5,500 private foundations in Illinois. All of these are required by the Illinois General Not For Profit Corporation Act to have a board of directors consisting of three or more directors.

These volunteers must direct the management of the non-profit organizations. Hopefully, the volunteer environment of Illinois will encourage mature adults to join non-profit boards of directors.



**Edward Maloney**  
**Senator, 18th District Chicago**  
**Chair, Senate Higher Education Committee**  
**Assistant Principal, Brother Rice High School**

As a high school teacher of political science, I felt that to give myself more credibility with my students I should somehow experience the political process rather than just teach material from a text.

I volunteered my time at the local Democratic political organization and quickly realized that if community problems were to be addressed and solved, the involvement and cooperation of civic, po-

litical, business and labor groups was necessary. I carried that lesson with me to the General Assembly.

During my tenure in the State Senate, I have been involved in passing legislation that has had a positive impact on the citizens of Illinois.

However, the single most important project I participated in was the closing of an extended care facility in my dis-

trict that had a history of incidents involving elder abuse and neglect. This action took the cooperation and effort of community residents, law enforcement, and various state agencies.

Civic engagement, to be successful, should *involve* all of us and because of that involvement it ultimately will have a positive *impact* on all of us.



**Robert Mees, President**  
**Illinois Council of Community College Presidents and**  
**John A. Logan College**

One of the greatest civic engagement experiences involving older adults has been the Purdy School Days which are held each year at John A. Logan College.

Purdy School is a one-room schoolhouse, which was built in 1860 and used as an elementary school from 1861 to 1951. It was relocated to the John A. Logan College campus in 1983. Purdy School Days are held on campus in the fall and spring of each year.

These week-long events provide over 250 school children an opportunity to encounter a school day

historical experience. Ten retired school teachers volunteer their time to conduct these sessions, which are well received by the students and their current teachers.

A log cabin that was added to this historical village in 2007 has added even more to the historical experience for people in southern Illinois. This log cabin was built by Emanuel Hunter in 1818 and was donated to the College by the Hunter family in 2006.

The relocation of Purdy School and the Hunter Cabin was made possible by grants from the Julia Harri-

son-Bruce Foundation in Herrin.

John A. Logan College is so grateful to the retired teachers who have made this event such a great success and a beneficial learning experience for school children in southern Illinois.

Plans are also underway to expand the village to include more historical structures and give our younger generation a greater appreciation for the history of southern Illinois.



## **Mike O'Donnell, Executive Director East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging**

Paul Rosenberger of Decatur, Ill., is a role model of civic engagement for people of all ages. A retired design supervisor and engineer, Rosenberger brings his leadership skills, uncanny problem solving ability, and determination to his volunteer commitments. Wes Tower, Rosenberger's friend and the immediate past chairman of the East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging, said, "In the city of Decatur, everybody knows when Paul Rosenberger makes a commitment he will do the work and he will see to it that

you do your share as well."

Rosenberger brings a unique perspective to his volunteer commitments. Twenty-five years ago, he was diagnosed with Guillain-Barre Syndrome, a disorder in which the body's immune system attacks part of the peripheral nervous system. Today Rosenberger leads a full and active life with the support of his wife, Verlyn. He uses a wheelchair, drives a van outfitted with hand controls, and spends an average of 40 hours a week at his home computer. Rosenberger never hesitates

to ask for help and when confronted with an obstacle he takes the time to engage others in solving logistical problems and overcoming barriers.

Paul Rosenberger's life demonstrates why the civic engagement of older adults is important for Illinois. His friend Wes summed it up by saying, "Paul has single-handedly become the example of how an individual's care and concerns can be manifested in actual accomplishments for the good of the community."



## **Bernarda Wong, Founding Director Chinese American Service League**

Feng Ying Huang demonstrates a wonderful example of civic engagement.

She immigrated to the United States in 1998 with little more than a high school education. Her son was unable to come with her because he was over 21 years old but Huang had a strong desire to reunite her family in her new homeland.

She began attending citizenship classes at the Chinese American Service League. For six years she tirelessly

prepared for her citizenship test. In 2004, after years of hard work and determination, Feng Ying was able to become a U. S. citizen.

Her dedication to her new country did not stop there. After passing the citizenship test, Huang continues to volunteer at the Chinese American Service League and helps other immigrants on their road to citizenship. She serves her community by teaching others how to prepare for their test. When the

students get frustrated, she is there with words of encouragement. Feng Ying also encourages new citizens to participate in the democratic process by voting.

Community participation and volunteering are important for all citizens of Illinois regardless of where we are born or how old we are. We can all make a difference in our community.

# Aging is an Asset for Civic Engagement

The fifth forum, held in February, examined the impact of aging on Illinois and the responsibility of individuals and communities for civic engagement.

When four generations sit down together the conversation can be profound and humorous, particularly when discussing issues like authority, responsibility, and technology. Initially the forum participants were divided into four groups representing their generations.

They discussed several topics (see Figure 1) including authority, a concept that is different for each generation. When each group reported their views on authority, Generation Y said they are often rebellious. Generation X said they tend to collaborate and the Boomers responded that they often question authority.

The report from the oldest generation was given by Mary Walsh, a "60 something" who took the stage with a gleam in her eye. She said, "The view of authority from the oldest generation is 'We're it.'"



L to R: John Murphy, vice president, University Professionals of Illinois; Jackie Mattfeld, Center for Creative Aging, Harold Washington College; Mary Walsh, Rosemont Intergenerational Programs; Evelyn Gooden, AARP; and Jerry Carducci, Age Lessons.

That humor and camaraderie permeated the dialogue Feb. 19 at DePaul University, the setting for Aging is an Asset for Civic Engagement. This was the fifth in the series that has provided a look to the future of an aging society and how we should prepare. Civic involvement is an important part of community life but participants agreed that we need new momentum to tap the great resources of the citizenry. Further, the idea that aging is an

**"The view of authority from the oldest generation is 'We're it.'"**



Dennis Holtschneider  
President  
DePaul University

asset for civic engagement prompted participants to project many ways that older adults could make an impact.

Participants were welcomed by President Dennis Holtschneider of DePaul University. He said that DePaul was founded as the college of immigrants and he has witnessed that continued tradition.

"Although the faces of DePaul's immigrant students have changed from the turn of the 20th century, in which they were predominantly Irish, German and Italian, to the turn of the 21st century, in which they are largely Latino, DePaul's commitment to educating them has remained steadfast."

DePaul takes civic engagement to heart. In the 2006-07 academic year, DePaul's Steans Center developed and supported more than 170 courses linking faculty, students, and community-based organizations through an experiential learning methodology that integrates community service into academic courses.

Shawn Healy, the Resident Scholar for the McCormick Tribune Freedom Museum, told about a survey to gauge America's knowledge

of First Amendment freedoms. Of the 100 people surveyed, only one could name the five freedoms (religion, speech, press, assembly, and petition), but 22 could name all of the five members of the fictional Simpson family.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the role of older generations in engaging others of all ages in the community and in the democratic process and to explore civic engagement in relation to education, aging, and public policy.

Civic Engagement framed the topics discussed in four groups:

- Assembling Partners:  
Building Communities
- Understanding Generations and Cultures through History and Dialogue
- Sharing Examples of Intergenerational and Service-learning Programs
- Revitalizing Democracy through Civic Engagement, both Social and Political.

## Aging is an Asset Forums

Gathering Information about the Impact of Aging on Life in Illinois

### Past Meetings

- I. Higher Education - October 11, 2006**
- II. P-20+ Education - February 26, 2007**
- III. Age-Friendly Communities - June 12, 2007**
- IV: Workforce - November 13, 2007**
- V: Civic Engagement - February 19, 2008**

### Coming

- VI: The Media - October 2008**
- VII: The Economy - February 2009**

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Policy Papers are available [www.siu.edu/offices/iii](http://www.siu.edu/offices/iii)

**Figure 1: Comparing the Perceptions of Four Generations**

|                                     | TRADITIONALISTS<br>[1922 – 1945]   | BOOMERS<br>[1946 – 1964]   | GENERATION X<br>[1965 – 1980]   | MILLENNIALS (GEN Y)<br>[1981 – 2000]   |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| EVENTS                              | ADVENT OF SOCIAL SECURITY<br>GREAT DEPRESSION<br>WWI, WWII AND VIETNAM<br>CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT<br>SPACE EXPLORATION | BEATLES AND ROLLING STONES<br>CULTURAL CHANGE – ROCK REVOLUTION<br>VIETNAM WAR<br>ASSASSINATIONS; JFK, MLK, RFK<br>FEMINIST MOVEMENT<br>COLD WAR   | IRAN HOSTAGE CRISIS<br>CHALLENGER EXPLOSION<br>FIRST GULF WAR<br>WATERGATE                | 9/11<br>COLUMBINE<br>RISING TUITION<br>KATRINA   |
| COMMUNICATIONS                      | TELEPHONE<br>LETTERS<br>HAVING HARD TIME WITH TECHNOLOGY!!   | FACE-TO-FACE<br>TELEPHONE<br>PRINT<br>EMAIL  | CELL PHONES<br>EMAIL  | TEXT MESSAGING<br>EMAIL<br>MYSPACE<br>SPACE BOOK   |
| VIEW OF AUTHORITY                   | RESPECT AUTHORITY – NO MIDDLE GROUND   | QUESTION AUTHORITY   | POWER RELATIONSHIPS<br>CYNICAL – DON'T RECOGNIZE HIERARCHY.<br>COLLABORATE WITH AUTHORITY | REBELLIOUS<br>OWN PERSON   |
| MOTIVATING FACTORS                  | ROLE MODELS<br>FAMILY APPROVAL<br>VALUES<br>COMMUNITY GUIDED, PARENTS AND GRAND PARENTS                              | WORK ETHIC<br>NEED TO DO GOOD DEEDS IN SOCIETY<br>MONEY  | MONEY<br>RECOGNITION<br>MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS – ON/OFF THE JOB                         | MONEY<br>PEER PRESSURE<br>LIFE EXPERIENCES OF OTHERS   |
| BONUS QUESTION:<br>CIVIC ENGAGEMENT | CONSIDER AN EXTENSION OF FAMILY<br>AWARENESS OF INTERDEPENDENCE  | STAY-AT-HOME MOMS WERE INVOLVED WITH ORGANIZATIONS (I.E. PTA)<br>DUAL INCOME FAMILIES – NO TIME TO GET INVOLVED.<br>WOMEN MOVING MORE INTO PUBLIC SERVICE<br>MEN INCREASING INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION | CRISIS – GEN X'ERS DIDN'T GET ENGAGED. "ME" GENERATION.                                   | VOTING AND DEMOCRATIC PROCESS<br>EXPECTATION AND PRESSURE TO ENGAGE FROM MIDDLE SCHOOL AND UP.<br>IN-SERVICE DAYS AT SCHOOL<br>FAMILY: GRANDMOTHER-SPEAK WHEN SPOKEN TO;<br>MOTHER – COMMUNICATOR;<br>GEN Y – COMMAND RESPECT<br>STRONG MEDIA INFLUENCE;<br>BEHAVIOR, STYLES AND BUYING. |

The Aging is an Asset for Civic Engagement participants were divided into four groups, the Veterans or Traditionalists (born 1922-1945); the Boomers (born 1946-1964); Generation X (born 1965-1980) and Generation Y (born 1981-2000). Jerry Carducci from Age Lessons led the exercise by asking each group to answer questions about history, characteristics of their generations, and information about motivating factors. A last question provided more information about civic engagement. Find your generation in the chart above and compare your answers to those listed.

*Rather than ask the question, "What will we do with all these old people," ask  
"What will we do with all these resources?"*

*The National Commission on Civic Renewal described a trend in our country. "Too many of us have become passive and disengaged. Too many of us lack confidence in our capacity to make basic moral and civic judgements, to join with our neighbors to do the work of community, to make a difference." The forum, Aging is an Asset for Civic Engagement was the setting for a dialogue with four generations to discuss the responsibility of individuals for civic engagement, share ideas and perceptions, and develop recommendations on how to increase civic involvement throughout the Illinois.*

## Assembling partners: Building communities

Every civic engagement project begins with communication about what you will do, how you will do it, and who will do what. People need to feel comfortable in their environment and have a voice about what the community needs.

The participants in this group answered the question posed by the National Commission of Civic Renewal. Individuals must move beyond being passive and disengaged and must develop more confidence that they can make a difference. It is like the famous quote from John Gardner in *Building Community*: "In a healthy community each group will reach back to the whole group and ask 'How can we help How can we sing our part in the chorus.'"

Everyone has a voice but too often we believe that public life is only for politicians or celebrities and we lose people because we are not inclusive and do not



L to R: Evelyn Golden, AARP; Mary Walsh, Rosemont Volunteers; Robin Stearnes, The Stearnes Group; Preston Morgan, Illinois Community College Board; and Michelle Sanford, Center for Adult and Experiential Learning.

listen. Everyone can and should have a voice in the course of our communities and the organizations that govern our lives.

The recommendations focus on two issues that are important across generations. Participants emphasized getting people comfortable and the value of each person's contribution.

## Understanding generations and cultures through history and dialogue



L to R: Sue Kroll, Curie High School; Jerry Carducci, Life Lessons; Pat Bearden, American Family History Institute; Shawn Healy, McCormick Tribune Freedom Museum. Not pictured: Billie Drakeford, DePaul Steans Center; Doris Odem, Urban Leadership Center, UIUC; Rana House and Monica Ross, Curie High School.

One of the building blocks of civic engagement is history. The stories of our country and our families give a picture of our freedoms and how they were won. Historical events are different for each generation.

As participants discussed the impact of history, they pointed to misunderstanding between generations. When generations don't have the opportunity to be together, they often develop misconceptions about old and young — the myths about aging and youth. For example, old people are viewed as sick, grouchy, and stubborn. Young people are viewed as selfish, know-it-alls, and spendthrifts.

When generations have the opportunity to sit down together and discuss the issues, each defines itself and its realities.

## Sharing examples of intergenerational and service-learning programs



L to R: Chris Skrable, Center for Experiential Learning, Loyola; Eric Powell, VISTA Leader, Illinois Campus Compact; Jon Schmidt, Service Learning, Chicago Public Schools; Jessica Blake, Hyde Park Neighborhood Club; Jackie Mattfeld, Harold Washington College. Not pictured: Heather Dudzinski, Little Brothers Friends of the Elderly; Steve Fouts, Living Library Project Leader; Angelis Griden, Curie Metro High School; and Kathleen Higgins, CPS teacher.

Older and younger generations are often considered two disempowered sets of people who need services rather than acting as resources. Bringing them together can bring magical moments.

Some examples of how young and old give back to the community include: Little Brothers Friends of the Elderly help with young children; the Laboure House features living arrangements and helping roles for elders and students. Retirees and middle school students get together in Internet penpal programs and sometimes retirees convince budding first-grade writers to send a letter. Curie High School students bring local elders to a prom.

Participants said that intergenerational and service-learning programs are the essence of civic engagement.

## Revitalizing democracy through civic engagement both social and political

According to *Generations*, the Journal of the American Society on Aging, the two components of civic engagement are political and social engagement. "Political engagement refers to those behaviors that influence governmental processes at the local, state, and national levels. Social engagement refers to actions that connect individuals to others and that relate to care or development."

From Gen Y to Veterans, all have important experiences and the capacity to cultivate civic life. That is not always easy to do. We know there are rules in our society that provide disincentives, such as laws that discourage government employees from political involvement.

Every age has something to contribute to the community. Students reinforce their curriculum and make learning real through projects like oral history, improving the environment, getting out the vote, and so forth. Boomers and retirees can help provide leadership and emphasize the fact that everyone has



L to R: Nancy Chen, Women's Bureau, U.S. Dept. of Labor; John Murphy, University Professionals of Illinois; Kathy Slover, St. Vincent DePaul Center; Kathy Engelken, Illinois Campus Compact. Not pictured: Ann Rapp Stearns Center, DePaul University; and Sara Montemayor, Corporation for National Service.

something to contribute.

Participants said that we need to work with corporations, business, and education to develop procedures for how their employees can give time. They can track employee endeavors and foster a culture of civic engagement.



Listening to the Recommendations: L to R front: Rana House, Angelia Griden, and Monica Ross, Curie High School; Back: Doris Odem, Urban Leadership Center, UIUC; Sue Kroll, Curie High School; Billie Drakeford, DePaul Steans Center; Jerry Carducci, Age Lessons

## Recommendations

*Civic engagement relies on the power of one person and the unity that comes from a collective effort for change. Civic engagement is less about people as needs and more about their contributions and building a sense of commitment.*

### Individual Contribution

- Emphasize the importance of each person's contribution regardless of age or culture.
- Reach out to all citizens to get them involved in their communities through individual efforts, family activities, education projects, or community ventures.
- Encourage retirees to act as a catalyst for engaging citizens of all ages.

### Publicity

- Publicize the examples of generations working together to promote civic engagement and leadership.
- Encourage individuals and groups to send their stories to the media so that others can join and appreciate the importance of work in a democracy.

### Dialogue

- Encourage dialogue between generations to plant the seeds of intergenerational leadership.
- Promote oral history projects that enhance understanding between generations.
- Encourage others to vote, learn more about political leaders and get involved in political campaigns.

### Business, Government, and Education

- Advocate for more civic engagement through the institutions where citizens are educated and find employment.

# Civic Engagement throughout the Lifespan: From the earliest hours to the last

*The stories and best practices featured in this section come from two sources: the Continuance archives and existing programs. Civic engagement is a lifetime experience, from the first hours of life to the last. The stories of civic engagement follow each stage of development and underline the opportunities for learning, service, and citizenship.*

The story of civic engagement unfolds when infants and their parents experience the good wishes of others, as neighbors and friends help with older siblings, prepare a meal for a weary mother and father, or help a single parent cope with a new baby. Some have a tradition of bringing every newborn a book.

Moving up the age ladder, civic engagement is old hat to many preschoolers and students in grade school. For example, when preschool students were concerned about people being sad or bored in the doctors offices and hospital waiting rooms, they decided to make a joke book. In an intergenerational day care, older adults and youngsters read together as part of their daily routine. Several

years ago an entire grade school organized a quilting project around reading, math, history, and technology. Older residents joined the students in talking about the history and the meaning of quilting to generations and cultures.

Middle school students found out that some sight-impaired elders missed reading their church bulletins and home newspapers, so the students planned a program with the local newspaper and read these special pieces to the seniors.

Computer programs have been popular service-learning programs because the retirees are eager to learn and students are eager and well-qualified to teach. Writing and research are also great civic engagement pro-

grams and help students experience the world of research and work.

Civic engagement is a powerful teaching mechanism, particularly for students learning to be teachers in community colleges and universities. Throughout campuses and communities, residents often find that there are many opportunities whether it is working in a political campaign or volunteering for those in need or voting.

All of these stories tell about the positive things that can happen in the community and give examples of individual students, teachers, parents, grandparents, and others who see a need and go about the business of addressing it.

Jane Angelis -Editor

## EARLY YEARS

# Civic engagement begins with infants and their parents

**Claudia Quigg, Founding Executive Director  
Baby TALK**

The first years of life offer unparalleled opportunities to impact brain development and future learning experiences. Windows of opportunity exist during which enriching experiences can make a most positive difference in enhancing a child's optimal development. Reaching parents of infants early is crucial to the success of Baby TALK (Teaching Activities for Reading and Knowledge).

Baby TALK is a unique organization that provides information and support to parents during the first days of their child's life. Baby TALK offers many opportunities for civic engagement for parents, community residents, and grandparents as they relate how the community can support the parents in raising their child.

Parents are the experts on their own children, and Baby TALK supports them in using this expertise to guide their children's development and delight in the emergence of their

individual personalities.

Programs for parents who are teens naturally include their own parents, as grandparents are often part of a multi-generational home. The contributions to care made by grandparents are recognized as an asset to children, and Baby TALK affirms these grandparents as they seek to support their own parenting teens.

At the public library, a weekly Baby TALK Times group is held for grandparents and their grandchildren who come together for songs, fingerplays and the encouragement and companionship of others.

In a Baby TALK community, retirees often volunteer their services in a variety of ways, including clerical support and reading to children. They remember their own grandparents saying that "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." A lifetime of their own learning has taught them that the early years really do matter.

### **Baby TALK (Teaching Activities for Reading and Knowledge)**

In the years since its inception in 1986, Baby TALK professionals have met with every parent who delivered an infant in Decatur, Illinois hospitals. Baby TALK has been replicated in 36 states by professionals who use Baby TALK's methods to build systems of support for young families. Evidence demonstrates that Baby TALK's reaching out to families at birth and working with them through their child's early years, results in real gains for children.

For more information about Baby TALK, write to [babytalk@babytalk.org](mailto:babytalk@babytalk.org) or call (217) 475-2234. You may also visit Baby TALK's Web site at [www.babytalk.org](http://www.babytalk.org)

**Because the early years  
really matter!**

## PRESCHOOL & KINDERGARTEN

# Laugh with kindergarten community helpers

Sylvia Haisley Patchin, Teacher

Five- and six-year olds are at an optimum age for benefiting from situations that cast them in the role of "helpers." This developmental fact, combined with the fact that saturating children with happy literacy experiences is at the top of kindergarten and first

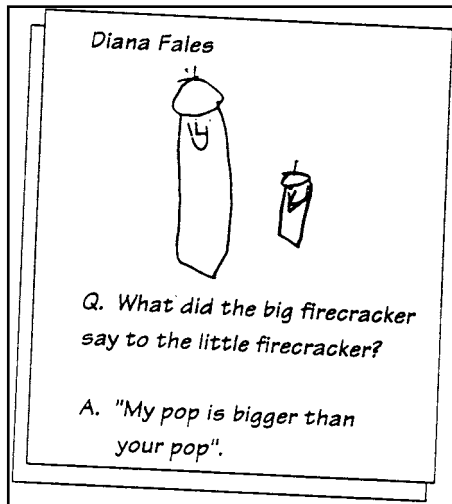
project with our community.

For homework, each kindergartner had a paper shopping bag with a joke book borrowed from the library, several 5" x 7" index cards, and a magic marker. At home the goal for the child and family was to do some research to find the book's funniest joke. The child was to write the joke on the card (an adult could write it, if necessary) and illustrate it. Fourth graders aided the kindergartners by printing, laminating, and assembling the collection into a book.

The class became instant community helpers by contributing their dose of humor to sick and anxious children. The kindergartners distributed their joke books to the waiting rooms of medical

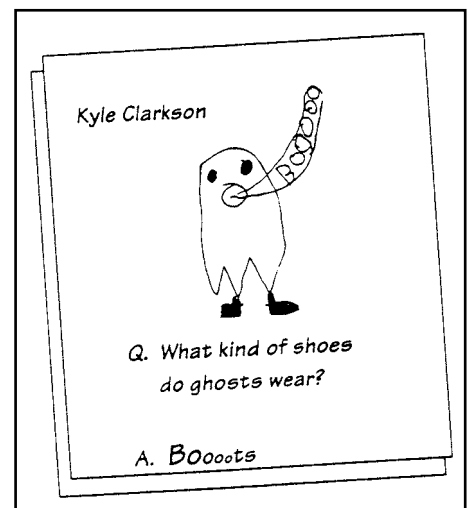
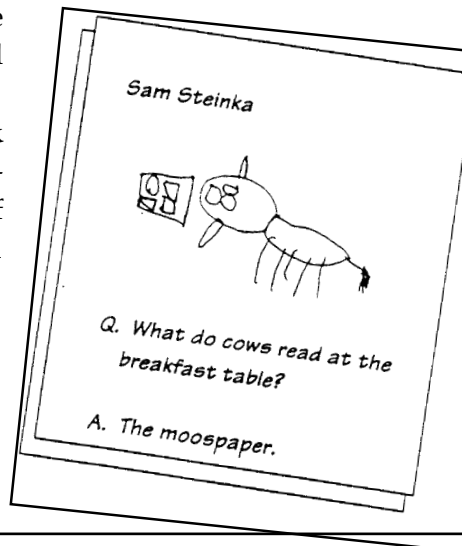
facilities and doctors' offices in our area.

Parents helped by driving small groups of children to their destinations. Parents of sick children found the book a useful tool to distract young patients and ease



grade teachers' agendas, was the basis for a successful project I did with my kindergarten class.

The children produced a book called *Laugh With the Kindergarten*, containing a collection of the funniest jokes children could find and illustrate. ("What did the judge say when five skunks walked into the courtroom?" Can you guess? "Odor in the court!" Get it?) Then, they shared the



their apprehensions. The kindergartners are aware that being able to laugh is powerful medicine and the process of helping others gives the child a lasting sense of pride and satisfaction.

*Thanks to Young Children, January 1994, and the NAEYC for permission to reprint this story.*

## PRESCHOOL & KINDERGARTEN

# White hair, wrinkles, and fascination with aging

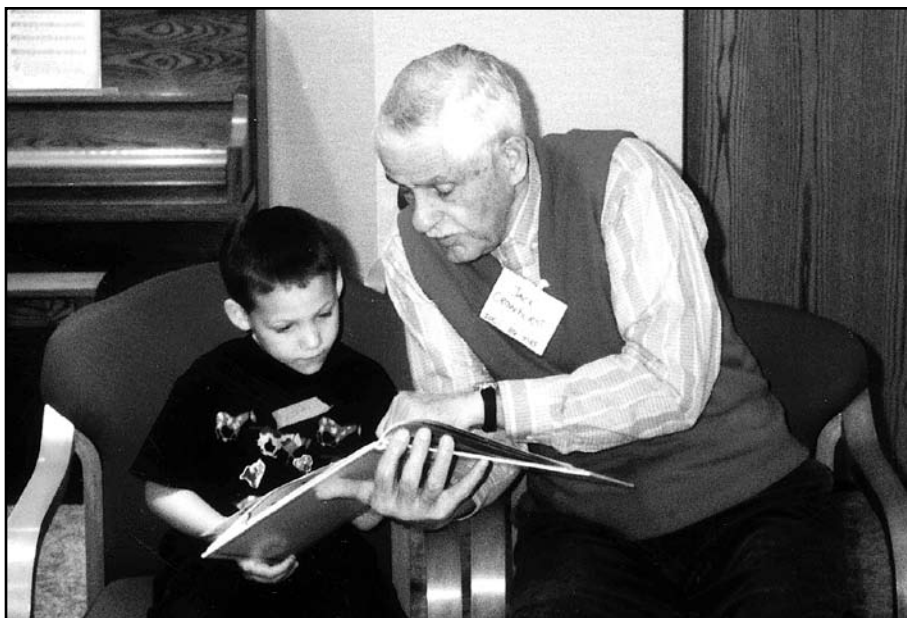
Jeanne Clark, Condell Medical Center Intergenerational Day Care Center

Children at the Intergenerational Day Care Center at Condell Medical Center spend time with older people every day. The children go down the hall to the living room and find older people waiting for them.

They ask “their grandparent” to come to their classroom for a visit. Some older adults use canes and walkers and wheelchairs. Someone helps position a walker, another hands a cane, and two youngsters gently turn a wheelchair around and head back to the classroom. Touching and moving these things dispels fears. Learning that this gadget is needed so that the grandparent can remain independent, suggests to the child that the grandparent may be in need of the preschooler’s assistance.

Over time this learning becomes a habit, a naturally occurring behavior based on respect. The children have learned to walk slower, to hold hands, and never to shove or push when walking with an older adult.

In preschool, children’s work is called play. They play with their daily grandparents and ask interesting questions. Children are curious about white hair, wrinkles on hands and faces, brown spots on the hands.



Reading a story brought attention to the spots on Grandpa Bob’s hands. “Do those spots wash off?”

For example, reading a story with Grandpa Bob, a 4-year-old noticed the brown spots on his hand. Grandpa Bob noticed the child studying his hand. He kept reading and the child touched a brown spot and looked at his own finger. Do those spots wash off? The children are learning about aging and how they can serve.

Children in intergenerational settings interact with older adults and learn about them as lovable people, capable of special relationships. The children look past all

the frailties to the people who give them undivided attention and nurture their curiosity and learning about life.

One little girl who had been in the program for two years went on to first grade. The first day of school she asked her new teacher, “Where are the grandmas and grandpas?”

## GRADE SCHOOL

# Quilting brings the community into the school

Kathy Kingston, Sidney Grade School

Quilting was the theme for a service-learning project that brought the designing and making of quilts to each K-3 class. The Illinois Quilt Research Project was a year-long community project that documented local history and culture.

First, a master quilter came to school. She met with each class to explain the history of quilts, let the students feel and hold a quilt, and ask questions. She showed the students how the material is cut into different geometrical shapes and sewn together to become the quilt top.

The students also learned how the batting is put between the quilt cover and the back, and how the quil-



ter uses small stitches to outline the design or makes ties throughout the quilt to hold everything in place.

The students discovered that quilting has applications to math, sci-

ence, writing, and reading. For example, younger students made graphs about the number of quilt squares in various pictures, and made comparisons of quilt sizes. Older students added the size of the squares to determine the final size.

Children wrote stories about making quilts, conducted oral histories about quilts in their families and communities, and related local culture to quilts in the community. Each class designed a different quilt for their classroom.



**Top photo:** Students and senior citizens put the quilt on the frame and make the finishing stitches. **Bottom photo:** Competencies in math are learned as student learn about shapes and sizes and discover graphs and proportions as they organize quilt pieces and design the final dimension.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL

# Reading to help senior citizens

**Anna Sanford, East Aurora School Service Center**

The Aurora Manor Nursing Home and Jennings Terrace Nursing Home formed a learning community with Cowherd and Waldo Middle Schools in Aurora as the sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students learned that the senior citizens enjoy the same things they do.

One way the students learned they could help and befriend the senior citizens was to read to them. The students read articles from the Reader's Digest mainly because they are the best length and are of interest. Several students read to the residents in Spanish, which really delighted the seniors.

Beacon News reporter Sandy Stevens spoke to students regarding how and why the newspaper is produced. Students then took a field trip to see the making of the newspaper. The role of the newspaper was discussed as to its relevance to the elderly, for example, keeping in touch with the news about friends and neighbors they are no longer able to visit. They also discussed which parts of the newspaper are



the most interesting to senior citizens. The students realized that the newspaper has more than just the front page and the sports page and that the newspaper is often a social item for seniors giving them community news that they might not otherwise hear.

The students interviewed the senior residents on two occasions. First, they took notes about the senior's life. Then they used the notes to write biographies about the residents. The students drew illustrations, put them into blank books and wrote the life stories of the residents. The books were then taken to the nursing home, read, and given to the residents. The students wrote letters to newspaper sponsors and letters to the Beacon News and kept journals about their experiences.

## A Student's View on Civic Engagement

**Steven Stephenson  
Waldo Middle School**

I read a book about Christopher Columbus to four nice ladies at the Jennings Terrace Nursing Home. While I was reading, we had many conversations. One of the ladies told me about how she was one of the first to be appointed to the police force in the City of Aurora. A 94-yearold lady told me how she ran into one of the biggest gangsters that every lived, Al Capone. It amazed me that each of these ladies talked to me about their past as if they had known me for a very long time.

My experience with the four ladies helped me to see older people in a new way. I am now able to talk with them more comfortably. Reading to them has helped me become a better reader in front of my classmates and outside the school. I think the Learn and Serve idea has made school more enjoyable and more meaningful for the students and the teachers. I hope we can continue this when I go to Aurora East High School.

## HIGH SCHOOL

# Students become computer instructors

**Joyce Mistine, Teacher  
Learn and Serve, Evergreen School District**

*"The students were very nervous for the first computer class. Many said they were going to skip school. 'You expect too much of us. It isn't easy to talk to someone for a whole hour.'"*

There are many senior citizens in Evergreen Park and so it seemed like a golden opportunity for one-on-one discussion about different service-learning projects. The students decided that a computer project with senior citizens would be a good idea.

They designed the curriculum and developed a booklet. We all defined ourselves in different roles as we prepared for the first session. The students became teachers and tutors, the teacher became an observer (I had to stop myself many times from returning to my teacher role).

The students were very nervous for the first computer class. Many said they were going to skip school. "You expect too much of us." "It isn't easy to talk to someone for a whole hour." But when the day arrived the students all appeared. Many of the senior citizens arrived early, some as much as 45 minutes early. The students were nervous about having to talk one-on-one with a senior citizen, but they were prepared with questions and discussion topics. They introduced each other and talked about the

senior citizen's high school years among other topics.

Later the students explained what they would do during the computer lesson and started the class. The first lesson planned was to teach the senior citizens how to use the mouse and play some games.

One older gentleman said, "I don't want to play any games." The student wasn't certain how to deal with that, so he raised his hand to ask the teacher. It turned out that the gentleman had arthritis and wasn't sure about using the mouse. After the class, the student talked about how uncomfortable he felt when the senior citizen didn't do what he wanted. The student said that gave him a new experience and helped him become more understanding of his teachers.

After the first session I heard comments from the students such as, "My student is the best." "No mine is!" The students were discussing the merits of their tutees and tales of the teaching sessions. The computer classes continued and were a great success.

## COMMUNITY COLLEGE

# Service learning as a research tool

Sylvia Martin, English Department, Black Hawk College

English 102 at Black Hawk College is a writing course that encourages students do get involved in service learning as a foundation for their research paper. □

Students who choose to participate in service learning are involved at the Boys and Girls Club of Moline and meet with their mentees twice a week for six weeks. They may choose activities from leadership and character development, education and career development, health and life skills, the arts, sports, fitness, and recreation. The students receive orientation from the administration of the Boys and Girls Club ranging in topics from rules to privacy.

Service learning can make students aware of the value and relevance of community service as a rich source of information, especially for a research paper. Reflection on the experiences helps students gather information and evaluate it. □

Each time they participate in an activity at the Club, they are required to write an observation and hand these in to their instructor every week. The information gathered for the research paper from the service learning gives the student experience with qualitative research. Additional background information comes from current periodicals, books, and Web sites or other electronic sources.

One of the most valuable real-world lessons learned through service learning is the responsibility to be at the Boys and Girls Club on time and to be prepared. One student remarked that the service learning taught her more about the real world and working with people than all her courses so far. She said that she wouldn't forget the research strategies she had learned.

### IMPACT OF SERVICE LEARNING ON STUDENT LEARNING

1. Awareness of the needs of the persons the students served
2. Awareness of the students' own abilities to make a difference at community agencies and institutions
3. Improvement of students' evaluative thinking skills
4. Awareness of the relevance and value of experience as a source of information for a research paper
5. More involvement in the research paper preparation process than students who chose not to gather part of their source material from a service-learning experience
6. More interest in the students' chosen research topics because of gathering half of the required source material from experiences outside the academic setting, compared to traditional students
7. Excellent integration of outside source material relevant to each student's research topic related to the service each student had given
8. Personal growth and maturity

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*"The institutions where we educate our citizens and provide them  
with employment have big roles to play  
in the civic lives of older adults."*

*From Generations: Civic Engagement in Later Life*

## UNIVERSITY

# Civic engagement from teacher to student

**Kathy Engelken, Illinois Campus Compact**

Stephanie Sharpe decided to use civic engagement as the umbrella for her student teaching in a Rockford fifth grade social studies class. Her students learned about the meaning of civic engagement by researching the term, identifying people who were civically engaged and finding quotes that described the meaning of civic engagement. On Saturdays, Theater students from Rockford College joined the group to sketch and paint a mural about civic engagement on the cafeteria wall.

After graduating with a degree in education, Stephanie has gone on to teach seventh and eighth graders in Belvidere. This year she was one of the Illinois Campus Compact/ State Farm Teacher Fellows, partnering with her mother, the Rockford College Faculty Fellow, to do Project Citizen. Students

from Belvidere and Rockford College have participated in several projects including gun control, teen shoplifting, and citizenship.

The seventh and eighth graders visited the State Legislature and presented their Citizen Project to a group of legislators. The eighth grade was approached by Rep. Lisa Hernandez to join efforts on gun control legislation. They provided Rep. Hernandez their research, which will contribute to the development of legislation for the fall session of the legislature.

In the meantime, the seventh grade submitted their research on teen shoplifting at the State Project Citizen competition and finished in first place. Now their "Don't Start" Project will be eligible for the national competition.

Stephanie says that her success with civic engagement programs

started with Illinois Campus Compact through workshops, service-learning events, and examples of others. She said that she has brought it full circle back to her students in the classroom.

Stephanie says that she has learned the secrets of being a civically engaged individual and taken seriously the role of teaching her students how to be engaged citizens, regardless of their age.

The students know they can make a difference. We had a reflection session the day after the seventh grade won the State Project Citizen competition. When I asked them to share what they had learned and what this project meant, their answers were amazingly genuine and sprinkled with civic learning.

The generous funding for these projects came from State Farm and the McCormick Foundation.

## Join Illinois Campus Compact for the 15th Anniversary Benefit Dinner

Thursday, Nov. 6, 2008,

Rally for Tomorrow Breakfast and Sessions on Friday, Nov. 7, 2008

The Palmer House Hilton Chicago

The dinner of Nov. 6 features Anna Deavere Smith, who played National Security Advisor Nancy McNally on NBC-TV's *West Wing* and a MacArthur Fellow who received a "genius grant." The dinner also includes second annual presentation to Illinois winners receiving the Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter Partnership Awards for Campus-Community Collaboration.

For further information, <http://www.illinoiscampuscompact.org>.

## COMMUNITY

# 'You don't have to move to live in a better neighborhood'

**Joe Dunn, Executive Director  
Illinois Coalition for Community Service**

Occasionally I have the good fortune of taking a road trip with one of my board members, a retired school librarian. The topic of civic engagement always finds its way into our conversation. What we have often said is that as we were growing up we never really had the option of not being engaged in our community. Our families were engaged, and so were we. It was a way of life.

Through my work with Illinois Coalitin for Community Service (ICCS), I have learned that our state is full of folks just like us, people who were taught at an early age that giving back to your community is just what you do. But, on the flipside, we have neighborhoods and even entire communities that have somehow lost their way.

When visiting these communities, it doesn't take long to figure out that somewhere along the line a disconnect took place between residents and their sense

of responsibility for maintaining community. It might have been school consolidation that left a rural community without a center of activity, or a neighborhood where crime and violence crept in like a thief in the night. In either case, the bond between residents and the community was weakened, and even broken. People became residents and not neighbors.

To those communities, I say,

**"For conditions to change,  
people must change. They  
must become involved,  
connecting others  
where they are."**

"Take heart." It doesn't have to be that way. As our ICCS community organizers work in many of the communities just described, there is no doubt that conditions can change. For conditions to change, people must change. They must become involved, connecting with

others where they are.

One of my favorite quotes is attributed to former Mayor Richard Arrington of Birmingham, Ala., one ICCS has placed on a T-shirt – "You don't have to move to live in a better neighborhood."

That philosophy is what drives our work with over 130 grassroots committees throughout Illinois. As the momentum of grassroots change in theses communities builds, we must remember that to sustain change long-term, our youth must be engaged. Even if civic engagement has skipped a generation or two, it is never too late to involve our youth.

The Points of Light Foundation reminds us that the best indicator of whether or not you will volunteer as an adult is if you volunteered as a youth. Invite a young person to join you in serving others. You can not only change a life; you can change a community.

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### Got Community?

Join in Celebrating the 8th Annual Paul Simon Community Service Banquet  
Northfield Center, Springfield, IL      Illinois Coalition for Community Services

August 29, 2008  
[www.time-to.org](http://www.time-to.org)

## COMMUNITY AND OLDER LEARNERS

### Retiree leadership academy

**Carol Davis, Vice President  
Spoon River College**

**W**e are never too old to learn...to grow...to lead! Canton, Illinois was once home of International Harvester and prospered for many years. When the plant closed in 1982, the economic impact on this small community affected every family in the area. Some moved away to seek new livelihoods; others remained and attempted to rebuild Canton's economic future. Within the last 26 years, the region has suffered hard times, but it has survived through the efforts of many dedicated individuals. And now many of those same individuals are retiring and remaining in the Canton community. They may be retired but they have unique experiences, skills, and talents to share.

In 2006, Spoon River College (SRC) received a generous grant from the Retirement Research Foundation in Chicago to establish Retiree Leadership Academies.

To date, five academies have been held and nearly 50 graduates have emerged. The individuals receive 20 hours of training over a six-week period with the goal of empowering retired leaders who will facilitate projects of benefit to the community. The comment heard most often from our graduates is "I've lived in Canton all my life but never understood our community fully until I participated in the Academy."

Our retirees have established many successful projects for our community. There is now a thriving Retirement Learning Institute each fall and spring. The Institute consists of a full day of workshops, networking, and meals completely facilitated by retirees for retirees.

A second project sponsored by the graduates involves our local alternative school for at-risk youth.



Graduates of the Retiree Leadership Academy at Spoon River College: L to R: Bill Froom, Barbara Carpenter, Carol Davis, Jackie Davis, John Favorita, and Norman Meyer. John was the project director for the Academy and will continue as a volunteer.

The graduates meet with the youth to talk about how generations can connect as well as sponsor a book club with the students each semester. Attendance is voluntary by the students and has increased each semester due to its popularity.

When SRC first began the program, it had one energetic project director, a retiree himself, and six individuals who were willing to give it a try. Now there is a waiting list of retirees desiring to go through the program.

Civic engagement is vital to the life of our communities and should be an objective for all of us, regardless of age. One of the most positive accomplishments of the Retiree Leadership Academy is that retirees are viewed as models by the at-risk students they have connected with over the last two years.

At the conclusion of the granting period in late fall, SRC's retirees will prepare a handbook for others wishing to create Retirees Leading Initiative projects of their own.

*For more information about the Initiative, contact Carol Davis at (309) 647-6395 or [cdavis@src.edu](mailto:cdavis@src.edu)*

# Lifelong: A Consortium of Older Learner Programs

## Purpose of the *Lifelong* Consortium

### • Support to New Programs

Those starting new programs find a wealth of experience and advice from other members.

### • Welcome Retirees to Campuses

Older learner programs develop strategies to involve retirees on campus as learners, mentors, advocates, sharers of their life experiences.

### • Discuss New Trends for Older Learners

The Lifelong Coalition advocates for policy and programs that address the educational needs and interests of retirees.

### • Conduct Research

Studies have been conducted on the educational needs and interests of retirees and habits of volunteering.

### • Increase Publicity about Older Learner Programs

Lifelong informs boards, presidents, and the legislature about older learners and their contributions to education.

### • Explore the Benefits of Civic Engagement

Lifelong will work with the new National Governors Association initiative for Civic Engagement to help develop new ways of connecting retirees.

## Background

The adage, “it isn’t over ‘til it’s over” is the basis for the widespread interest of retirees in education and growth; mental, social, and physical. Retirees speak dynamically about community colleges and universities and courses they take that contribute to their health, independence, and joy of life.

## History

Founded in 1989 by the Illinois Community College Board and the Intergenerational Initiative, SIUC after a survey of community college presidents indicated an interest in retirees. A planning group was convened, and in February 1992, Lifelong was formalized. In 1995, universities joined the coalition.

## Meetings

The Lifelong Coalition meets twice a year to discuss current trends, share programming ideas, and compare concerns and solutions.

## Executive Committee

Chair: Anita Revelle, Illinois State University; Vice Chair: Margaret Plaskas, Waubensee Community College; At Large: Mike Shore, Highland Community College; Lana Campbell, SIU Carbondale; Maria Malayter, National Louis University; John Allen, Lincoln Land Community College, Dawn Gibson, Rend Lake College, and sponsors, Preston Morgan, Illinois Community College Board and Jane Angelis, Intergenerational Initiative, SIU Carbondale.



Executive Committee Meeting: Preston Morgan welcomes Senator Ed Maloney to the Lifelong Executive Committee Meeting held on February 28 at the Illinois Community College Board offices. L to R: Elaine Johnson, vice president, ICCB; Geoff Obrzut, President and CEO, ICCB; Preston Morgan, director workforce development and sponsor of the Lifelong Consortium, Maria Malayter, Center for Positive Aging; National Louis University; Margaret Plaskas, Institute for Learning in Retirement, Waubonsee Community College. Not pictured: Anita Revelle, chair of Lifelong, and Senior Scholars, Illinois State University; Lana Campbell, Southern Illinois Learning in Retirement, SIUC; Jane Angelis, Intergenerational Initiative, sponsor of the group, and Senator Ed. Maloney, chair, Higher Education Communittee.

### Staying in Touch through Conference Calls

An information-sharing conference call for the Lifelong Consortium was held May 28 with several suggestions including speakers via conference call, a fall meeting, and sharing courses and programs that attract older learners. Carol Davis from Spoon River College offered to provide information regarding the Retiree Leadership Academy. Kathleen Pecknold, UIUC, shared information about the Osher Institutes that have provided funding for older learner programs.

### Institutional Members of the Lifelong Consortium

Membership, as listed by the Lifelong Directory, includes information about older learner programs in community colleges and universities. The largest program is at the College of DuPage, with 6,700 students. Most of the programs are peer led and managed with the help of institutional staff. The cost of the courses varies.

Black Hawk College, Bradley University, Carl Sandburg College, College of Lake County, College of DuPage, Danville Area Community College, Eastern Illinois University, Elgin Community College; Harper Community College, Highland Community College, Illinois Central College, Illinois State University, Illinois Valley Community College, Joliet Junior College, Kaskaskia College, Kankakee Community College, Kishwaukee College, Lewis and Clark Community College, Lincoln Land Community College, McHenry County College, Moraine Valley Community College, National Louis University, Northwestern University, Oakton Community College, Parkland College, Prairie State College, Rend Lake College, Richland Community College, Rock Valley College, Roosevelt University, Sauk Valley Community College, Shawnee Community College, Southeastern Illinois College, Southwestern Illinois College, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, Spoon River College, Triton College, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, Waubonsee Community College, Harold Washington College, John Wood Community College, and Western Illinois University

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# IBHE and the Future of Higher Education

## Regional Conversations Give Illinoisans a Chance to be Heard

The Public Agenda of the Illinois Board of Higher Education set in motion regional forums in the ten economic development districts to gain the perspectives of citizens representing education, business, and communities. People of all ages participated bringing a wide range of views on the future of Illinois and how higher education could set goals to complete in a global society.

"The central purpose of the Regional Forums was to receive feedback from local leaders, including legislators, employers, labor officials, and educators," Carrie J. Hightman, Chairwoman of the Task Force and the Board of Higher Education, said. "What these meetings also accomplished was to bring community leaders together to begin a dialogue that broadened their engagement in thinking about the future of their regions in fresh and creative ways."

Some of the questions that were asked and answered, "What are the central concerns and challenges in each region? How does the state help or hinder efforts to find solutions?" Ultimately the Public Agenda will have an economic and educational portrait of each region and a plan for the state.

The following are themes in 7 of the 17 forums. For a more

comprehensive view of the forums, connect to the [www.ibhe.org](http://www.ibhe.org).

### **1. Understanding the workforce of the future and the importance of higher education.**

In the first Forum, President Gayle Sanders at Richland Community College said that generation after generation has had good manufacturing jobs without postsecondary education, and now parents, teachers, students and many in the general public don't understand that those jobs are gone, and more education is needed to have a similar job and income. But differences exist from region to region. Christine Sobeck, president of Waubesa College said "Not all manufacturing jobs are leaving Illinois." She said that in their region manufacturing remains higher than you might expect. What is similar from



Left: Carrie Hightman, chair, Illinois Board of Higher Education, and right: Dennis Jones, president of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems and Leader for the Public Agenda Forums

### **Background**

A year ago, the General Assembly passed House Joint Resolution 69 that directed the Board of Higher Education to undertake a master planning process to come up with a Public Agenda that will link higher education to the educational and workforce goals of the state. The resolution called for a Task Force to be created to oversee this process.

So far the Task Force has reviewed a Public Needs Report that examined the state's educational, demographic, and economic trends, and reached a consensus on six "themes" from the needs report that are being developed into goal statements for the Public Agenda.

The goal of the Task Force is to develop a statewide, action agenda that will guide policymakers in creating policies and allocating resources to ensure all citizens of Illinois have the education, skills, and knowledge to succeed in the global economy.

region to region is that students, parents, and even teachers and professors don't understand the workforce. Superintendent Kathleen Hickey from Kankakee "Most teachers know what it takes to be a teacher, but there is very little training offered for teachers to help them understand careers and career paths." Robert Bolla, Dean of the Graduate School, Bradley University said that education and workforce development is like the 1950s. Retirees are walking off the stage and the replacement pipeline is not in place.

## 2. The Critical Importance of Health Occupations

One the most growing jobs is nursing followed by health care professions, particularly in rural areas. Harry Wollin, CEO of the Mason District Hospital, Havana, said, "We have 224 employees, the largest employer in our county. Courses in health care are a crucial need." Sandy Anton from the St. Francis Medical Center in Peoria: "There is a great disconnect in the workers we need to deliver health care. We have a huge gap in critical thinking. Workers come to us and don't know how to solve a problem. Technology has become an enemy because it precludes caring, connecting, and social relationships. We need to build that skill set." Sulbrina Day from Touchette Regional Hospital in East St. Louis, said that many students need mentors to help them complete their degrees. Venessa Brown from SIU Edwardsville concurred. "Many of



(Far Left) Linda Dillon from Springfield said that the ability to attend college goes way back. It starts when the children are young, that they are given the expectation they will go to college. "I have multiple degrees now, but when I was growing up my mother said, 'You will go to college,' So we expected it."

these students are first generation college students with an underprepared background. They need a lot of help and assistance. She suggested organizing something similar to a case management system. Kathleen Brown, executive director, Illinois Education Research Council, "We are missing support services and advising for single parents. There is limited help and training for non-traditional students and faculty don't know how they can help. We need ways to look at those issues."

## 3. Strengthening P-20 connections and Working Together

Every forum brought concerns about the need for stronger connections between each level of education, P-20, and that local coalitions must be part of a larger regional effort and the regional effort part of the larger statewide effort. P-20 connections are vital to competing in the global economy because they determine who will get through the educational pipeline. Clay

Baitman, vice president of instruction, SWIC, said that the policies of the state often encourage us to be competitors. If we are going to change the message it must be to create partnerships.

The P-20 connections also determine the many financial pools from economic development, workforce development, and education that could be used more effectively. Most forums reported progress in P-20 partnerships, but there is still much to be done. At the Black Hawk Forum, a local administrator said, "We should get everyone in the same room and find out what we can do together."

## 4. Geographical and Local Issues

Frank Barbre, Taskforce Member gave an example of a common challenge for Illinois, a state that borders six different states. "Students in White County are 75 miles from SIU, 100 miles from EIU, 150 miles from UI. Indiana is 35 miles. More and more students are leaving Carmi and going to Indiana

because of economics. We have to find a way to find a way to keep them in Illinois and move 4-year institutions closer."

The U.S. is tenth in the world according to the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development). If we are to be competitive, we need graduates in engineering, business, and health. Philip Lewis from the Kane County Board told about an MBA class of 34 students in Chicago. In that class, only 3 were U.S. citizens. We have to get students and communities thinking in a global mode so there are sufficient graduates in disciplines to maintain the competitive edge of the U.S.

## 5. Civic engagement discussion

The Center for Advances in Public Engagement describes the foundation of good public policy, "Rather than relegating people to the sidelines, it invites them to join the public dialogue surrounding a problem." The process of civic engagement was engendered during the Forums but civic engagement itself was not a hot topic. Research shows that students who are engaged and involved in their communities and campuses are more likely to succeed. Thus civic engagement is one of many topics that Chairwoman Hightman recommends thinking about in fresh and creative ways."

For a comprehensive report on all 17 forums, visit [www.ibhe.org](http://www.ibhe.org).

-Jane Angelis, Editor



Above left: James Polk: Bd member from Illinois Central College said that there is a sense of urgency for increased performance of minority students. It takes encouragement, motivation, and high expectations and it must begin at an early age.

Below left: Joe Rives, a WIU professor, reflected the concerns in other regions about the value of strategic planning. Will the the Public Agenda will be another information-gathering effort with few tangible results? Tom Layzell, IBHE staff member and former Chancellor of Higher Education in Kentucky, addressed those fears. "A public policy framework created by a public agenda can lead to significant improvements in educational delivery systems and new opportunities."



### National Center for Higher Education Management Systems

To assist with the planning process, IBHE commissioned a highly regarded consultant to undertake research of state needs and analysis of existing policies that may inhibit the ability to address those needs. The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, or NCHEMS, is a public policy research institute from Boulder, Colorado, and recognized as the leading experts on developing state plans in the nation.

### Forum Leadership

Dennis Jones, president, NCHEMS; Aims McGuiness, vice president NCHEMS, and Karen Paulson, staff member led the discussions in 17 locations. The IBHE Team was comprised of Mike Baumgartner, executive deputy director, Don Severer, deputy director, Linda Oseland, associate director, and Candice Miller, deputy, communications staff.

# The Last Word

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The history of American higher education has been closely tied to a broader set of social purposes. It was higher education that applied science to agriculture, provided the workforce for industrial expansion, contributed to inter-generational mobility, supported national defense, and pushed back the frontiers of knowledge in those domains important to the public.

Today, universities are being asked to be full partners in support of economic development, K-12 enhancement, local and state government decision making, and a host of other public priorities. In our case, we've been explicit in our intent to stand arm-in-arm with our region to support these priorities. We've aligned all dimensions of the campus to support not only the education of students but also the application of knowledge to advance those priorities important to the public.

Two years ago I chaired a regional planning process entitled

Vision 2015 which painted a picture of what we want our region to become over the next decade. We have a Scripps Howard Center for Civic Engagement that is the locus for student involvement in our region and we have a

*“At times, I believe we lose touch with the public. We are sometimes dismissive of public accountability and infer that no one knows our ‘business’ better than we do.”*

variety of centers and institutes that have as a primary mission the bridging between campus and community. In my view, as industries mature, they often lose touch with the public whom they serve. In the past, we've seen this in the banking and automobile industries, to name but two.

Higher education in this country is essentially a mature industry. At times, I believe we lose touch with the public. We are sometimes dismissive of public accountability and infer

that no one knows our “business” better than we do. This is a slippery slope for any industry including my own. Our university is working to avoid this risk by institutionalizing campus/community interaction in our planning process at the

campus, college, and departmental level. We've also taken seriously our responsibility to be good stewards of public resources including the need to regularly assess whether we are using those funds to produce the greatest impact.

James C. Votruba  
President  
Northern Kentucky University

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## CONTINUANCE MAGAZINE

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